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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [IAEA](#) [LO](#) [SY](#) [IR](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR SCHULTE'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT
GASPAROVIC

Classified By: Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik, for reasons 1.4 b and d

¶1. (C) Summary. Ambassador to the UN and International Organizations in Vienna, Gregory Schulte, conducted consultations July 9 with the Slovak Government regarding Iran's nuclear activities and Syria's clandestine program. Ambassador Schulte met with President Gasparovic, senior officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, and gave a well-attended speech at the Slovak Foreign Policy Association. In response to Ambassador Schulte's briefing, President Gasparovic agreed that Iran's actions posed a threat and underscored that Slovakia would steadfastly support the international community's efforts to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapons capability. Gasparovic stressed that the Iranian problem must be solved diplomatically, but seemed to question whether this was possible given the Iranian leadership's defiance and lack of a shared sense of threat and urgency among some countries. Gasparovic urged unity and a "common approach," on Iran, so that the Alliance is not fragmented, as it was with respect to Iraq. We must get Iran right, he concluded. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Ambassador Schulte summarized for President Gasparovic the elements of the Iranian nuclear program, and using Slovakia (which purchases fuel for its 9 nuclear reactors) as an example, explained why Iran's justification for its uranium enrichment efforts is not credible. Schulte noted that IAEA Director General ElBaradei's latest report on Iran was the toughest he had seen in his three years in Vienna. The U.S. is convinced that the information underpinning ElBaradei's assessment, some of which comes from the U.S., but also from other countries, as well as the IAEA itself, is solid. The best chance for success in convincing Iran to cease its activities, Schulte stressed, lies in building a strong united front in support of the current "dual track" approach. The incentives package presented to Tehran by Javier Solana on behalf of the EU, the U.S., Russia and China, is comprehensive and seeks to address Iranian needs and concerns. At the same time, the international community needs to make clear that Iran faces a choice, and that failure to comply with its obligations will lead to further sanctions and isolation. Ambassador Schulte added the package Solana presented appears to have stimulated debate in Tehran, which is positive.

¶3. (C) President Gasparovic said that Slovakia shares the U.S. assessment of Iranian activities, and that it would be firmly behind the efforts of the P-5 plus 1, the UN and the IAEA. He also agreed that a unified approach on the part of the U.S., the EU, Russian and China, would enhance prospects for a diplomatic resolution. In this vein, Gasparovic added that he supports Missile Defense, but that "some circles are

taking the Iran threat lightly." (Comment: Gasparovic also sought to draw a distinction between his approach and that of the Prime Minister's on Iraq, saying that he had opposed the Slovakia's withdrawal from Iraq because it had created disunity within the Alliance. End comment.) President Gasparovic expressed concern, however, that sanctions could damage Iran and that differences of approach between the U.S. and the EU, on one hand, and Russia and China on the other, made it difficult to explain the policy to the public. President Gasparovic observed that breakthroughs on the Israeli-Palestinian front could help facilitate a peaceful resolution to the Iranian problem and suggested that increased diplomatic engagement with other Middle Eastern states, e.g., Syria, which Gasparovic visited in December, could also enhance prospects for success. Gasparovic acknowledged that the U.S. and Israel had opposed his visit to Damascus, but made clear that he believed it was important to engage, not "marginalize" key regional states.

¶4. (C) Ambassador Schulte provided background regarding Syria's nuclear activities and an update on the recent IAEA inspection in Syria. Schulte noted that Syria had worked in great secrecy, with assistance from North Korea, and that the reactor that the Syrians had built resembled closely the Yongbyon facility being decommissioned by the North Koreans. The IAEA inspectors who visited Syria in June were only given access to this site -- on top of which the Syrians had hastily constructed a building to help hide its purpose. The inspectors posed very tough questions to which the Syrians did not have answers. The issue will be addressed in the Director General's September report to the IAEA Board of Governors. Ambassador Schulte said the Syrian case demonstrate that countries can still build covert facilities and programs without the IAEA's knowledge, and highlights the danger of proliferation in this volatile region.

¶5. (C) President Gasparovic stated that he was concerned about the influence of President Ahmadinejad in the Arab world and closed by emphasizing again his belief that unity of purpose was essential in dealing with Iran, and drawing an implicit comparison with Iraq, added that the international community must get Iran right. If the situation becomes graver, Gasparovic said, we "will have to go beyond words and make very clear decisions." Comment: Gasparovic is clearly seized with the Iranian threat, but his questions and comments conveyed unease and concern about the "dual track" strategy and its chances for success, as well as about how to convince the public, in a post-Iraq context, of the threat. (The same sentiment was expressed also by a Ministry of Defense official in a subsequent meeting with Ambassador Schulte.) Though he did not ever explicitly mention the possibility of a military response, Gasparovic suggested in his final remarks comments that he believed that the "very clear decisions" that the international community might face could entail just that.

¶6. (U) This message has been cleared by UNVIE.

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